

INTERVIEW

Martin, Jiang on UAP/VP candidacy

*Top issues include accessibilty,
student autonomy, mental health*

By Emma Bingham
EDITOR IN CHIEF

With elections for UA president and vice president underway, The Tech sat down to talk with candidates Alexa Martin '19 and Kathryn Jiang '20 to talk about accessibility, communication between students and administrators, and their objectives for the coming year. Martin currently serves as UA vice president and Jiang as UA secretary.

Remember to vote for both UA and Class Council online by Friday, March 23 at 5 p.m.

The Tech: Why are you running?

Martin: Before coming to MIT, a lot of people see it as a very magical, inspiring place and a lot of that is lost during our time here. I care about preserving that, and that could be done through preserving student autonomy and encouraging innovation on campus and just making it a more exciting place to be.

Jiang: I think there's been a lot done in the last couple of years to improve student-admin relationships, but a lot more still needs to be done. And this is something I'm really passionate about: not just supporting student autonomy but also making sure that student communities are preserved.

The Tech: Why do you think you're running unopposed this year?

Martin: Similar to when [Sophia Liu '17 and Daysi Gomez '18] were running, there was trust in the current leadership of the organization and trust in the work that we've been doing. People feel that it's okay for us to continue in our leadership and didn't see a great reason for us to run opposed and have new leadership come in.

The Tech: If you each had to prioritize just two items in your plat-

form, which would they be?

Jiang: I would prioritize academics and mental health.

Martin: Those are the exact two I was going to say!

The Tech: What are the initiatives that you think are the most important in those areas?

Martin: For mental health, right now a lot of administrators think, 'Oh you've done a lot of work. We're okay now.' But I don't think that's true. There's a lot of room for improvements in mental health, [such as] increasing accessibility to both MIT Mental Health and S3, specifically bringing S3 deans into dorms and potentially having off-campus [S3] office hours for students that live in FSILGs.

Jiang: Continuing the work on a unified mental health center on the west side of campus either in the main group, the student center, or another location would also help with accessibility and distance.

Martin: And then for academics, it's both education and professional development. I care a lot about carrying forward the recommendations from the [Designing the] First Year Experience class. For professional development, we should expand career fair to be more representative of various majors. We put so much emphasis on this one career fair. But that's a very unreasonable thing to do because different fields recruit at different times throughout the year. I think there needs to be a greater emphasis on professional development throughout the whole year.

The Tech: You have both been serving on the UA for the past year. What do you identify as your major accomplishments from the last year? What did you have the most hand in working on, and how did that play out?

Elections, Page 3



JAKE BELCHER

Renowned cellist Yo-Yo Ma performs as a part of his Karl Taylor Compton lecture Mar. 19 in Kresge Auditorium.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Back in Bach: Yo-Yo Ma at MIT

Ma gives Compton lecture on the role of culture, performs

By Torri Yearwood
EDITOR

Every year, the Compton Lecture committee invites a great mind to talk about the current issues of our time. The March 19 lecture featured cello virtuoso Yo-Yo Ma, who spoke about the upcoming role of culture in our society. Ma defined culture as an agreed-upon shared knowledge, including everything from music to mathematics to painting; Ma claimed that without culture, we hurtle towards an edge where we cannot trust each other.

He advised that we should incorporate culture into our communication. "We were in an era of the specialist," Ma said in an interview with *The Tech*. "However, I think more people going into [the center of society] need to be both generalists and specialists, so

that if you're a specialist, you can translate to a general audience."

Ma used Bach's famous first cello suite prelude to demonstrate how this edge-center oscillation might look: reinterpreting the work from the view of disruption and reconstruction, forming a metaphor for how we must learn to work together to rebuild from cycles of turmoil. Unfortunately, he points out, this way of thinking grows from the fear of ridicule and discomfort.

Ma then related analytic-empathetic decision-making to how he used to think that performing music was about perfection, about analysing a piece and reproducing it perfectly; but, he later realized that technical perfection is nothing without emotional power. This balance, he claims, generalizes to most situations and decisions — and indeed, culture requires it. He said that we need to learn to access both

rationality and intuition simultaneously. Of course, there is a relevant Bach piece for this paradigm too: cello suite No. 5 Movement IV — its contrasting melodic lows and highs a metaphor for burden and struggle leading to hope.

Culture is made of building blocks, Ma said: music is built on Bach's blocks, science on fundamental research, and so forth. The secret to making these blocks, at least in music, is to be three people at once: the creator, the performer, and the listener, all working together to build a memorable performance, which can become a new block for others to build on.

On his own part, Ma is going to play Bach's Preludes around the world, especially in places of conflict. He hopes to use this aspect of culture as a way to unify people and

Yo-Yo Ma, Page 2

IN SHORT

The Tech is looking for science and features writers and photographers.

The undergraduate fall housing and dining applications are due April 1.

Summer housing applications will become available March 25.

Voting for UA elections is open. Polls close Friday, March 23 at 5 p.m.

Have a great spring break!

Send news and tips to news@tech.mit.edu.

New House to become Tier 1 dorm next year

Doubles will increase in price from \$4,390 to \$4,710, singles from \$4,970 to \$5,325

By Sheila Baber
NEWS EDITOR

After months of renovation, New House is the first non-dining dorm to be part of the Tier 1 category, the most expensive housing option, starting fall 2018. The decision was officially announced March 2, after Division of Student Life officials met with the New House heads of house, area director, and student government.

In an interview with *The Tech*, David Friedrich, senior director of housing operations and renewal, said this decision was part of MIT's capital renewal plan, which exam-

ines "how our facilities [are] meeting the needs of our communities today."

According to a March 2 email sent by New House president Emily Tang '19 to residents, the price for a single will increase from \$4,970 to \$5,325, and a double from \$4,390 to \$4,710.

Some residents are dissatisfied with New House becoming more expensive. In an email to *The Tech*, Dou Dou '18 of iHouse wrote, "If Housing wants us to pay Tier 1 pricing, then give us a Tier 1 dorm. Look at the other Tier 1 dorms right now. New House is nowhere near a Tier 1 dorm even after reconstruction, both in terms of facilities and aesthetics. The

bottom line is — students shouldn't be paying more than it actually is."

Friedrich encouraged students to reach out to resources such as the Student Financial Services to talk about their situation on a case-by-case basis. He said, "We don't want barriers for students to be able to choose where they want to live and the communities they want to live with on this campus."

To ease the transition of New House to a Tier 1 dorm, Tang wrote that New House will work with CASE and S3 so "everyone in the house feels comfortable seeking financial support and talking about it openly."

Built in 1975, New House underwent renovations in 2015, and again

starting June 2017. Houses 1 and 2 are currently open and are occupied by Chocolate City, iHouse, German House, and French House. La Casa and the numbered houses are displaced throughout campus and Boston. The rest of the building is expected to reopen by the start of the 2018-2019 academic year.

According to Friedrich, the design of the new space was guided by the Architectural Principles Document written by students, faculty, and staff under Vice President and Dean for Student Life Suzy Nelson in 2016, and conversations with specific communi-

New House, Page 2

CLOSETED HUMOR

Why this coming-of-age story didn't quite make the cut. **ARTS, p. 7**

PHYSICS AND HOCKEY

Read this week's student spotlight. **CAMPUS LIFE, p. 5**

HUMOR AND DANCE

Romeo and Juliet find tragedy in ballet. **ARTS, p. 8**



"PUT ON A SHIRT"

MIT Shakespeare Ensemble's cyberpunk take on a regal classic. **ARTS, p. 10**

STORY OF AN
ALIEBN

Jonathan Sun's path from Twitter fame to PhD at MIT. **CAMPUS LIFE, p. 5**

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WEATHER

Winter refuses to budge as spring begins

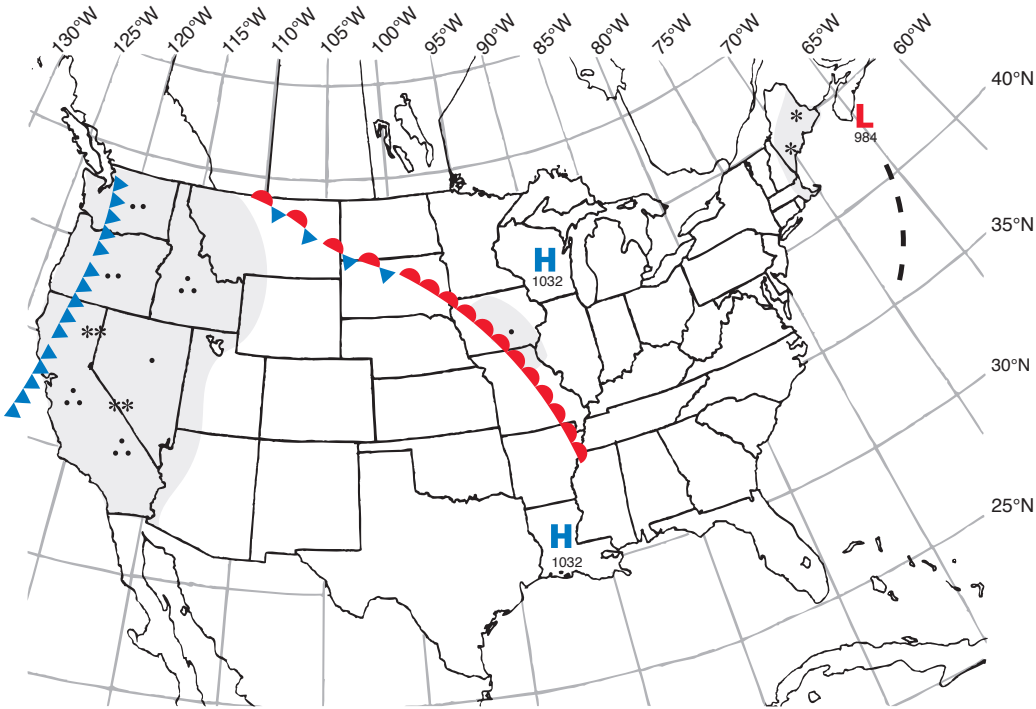
By Jordan Benjamin
STAFF METEOROLOGIST

By the calendar, we are now several days into astronomical spring. By the frigid weather, however, you'd never know it. The 4th nor'easter in the past 3 weeks is currently pulling away from the Eastern US coast, has brought heavy snow to much of the mid-Atlantic and Northeast. In its wake, atypically cold temperatures will persist, with high temperatures in the lower 40s °F and low temperatures in the 20s. The cold, winter-like weather that has dominated this month shows

no signs of leaving anytime soon either. March is on pace to be colder (and snowier) than February, with a mean temperature so far of 35.6 °F (2.0 °C) compared to February's warmest ever 38.1 °F (3.4 °C). March was also warmer than February last year, but this feat had only occurred twice before in the 144-year meteorological record at Boston and is extremely rare for the Eastern US. Nevertheless, it is almost April. Spring is here - the days are getting longer, the sunshine stronger, and there's only so long Old Man Winter can maintain an icy grip on the region.

Extended Forecast

Today: Snow Showers Ending. Mostly Cloudy. High around 38°F (3 °C). NW Winds at 10-20 mph.
Tonight: Mostly Cloudy. Low around 28°F (-2 °C). Winds NW at around 10 mph.
Tomorrow: Mostly Cloudy. High around 41°F (5 °C). Low around 31°F (-1 °C). Winds NW at 5-10 mph.
Saturday: Partly Cloudy. High around 40°F (4 °C). Low around 31°F (-1 °C).
Sunday: Mostly Cloudy. High around 35°F (2 °C).



Situation for Noon Eastern Time, Thursday, March 22, 2018

Weather Systems	Weather Fronts	Precipitation Symbols	Other Symbols
H High Pressure	--- Trough	☁* Snow	☁ Fog
L Low Pressure	⬤⬤⬤ Warm Front	☁ Rain	⚡ Thunderstorm
§ Hurricane	▲▲▲ Cold Front	☁ Light	☁ Haze
	⬤▲⬤ Stationary Front	☁* Moderate	
		☁* Heavy	

Compiled by MIT Meteorology Staff and The Tech

‘Party hard,’ Ma advises students

Yo-Yo Ma, from Page 1

teach them how to think of culture as a solution. When asked what college students can do in to forward this effort, Ma said, “Do the equivalent of a social/cultural LinkedIn or Facebook that actually connects people who want to find truths, who are teach-

ers, who are academics, and match them with people who need it, students who desperately need some help.” “It’s complex,” he admitted. “Solve the difficult problems, and find the ways that people actually need that can get [solutions] to them, and get the student body involved in doing that. Then get other

schools involved: start something, make it work, take it everywhere. ... Once you get people involved, you get an enlightened citizenry, which can actually get into action when they need to — to vote in their local elections, to put people on school boards.” But in the meantime, he says, “Party hard.”

Students find new price unwarranted

New House, from Page 1

ties within New House. Renovations have included installing elevators and restructuring the building to be accessible.

Similar renovations are planned to take place at other dormitories across campus, Friedrich said, in order to “bring the conditions of the buildings to a more equal level across the campus.”

Tuition and fees to increase to \$51,832 for the 2018-19 AY

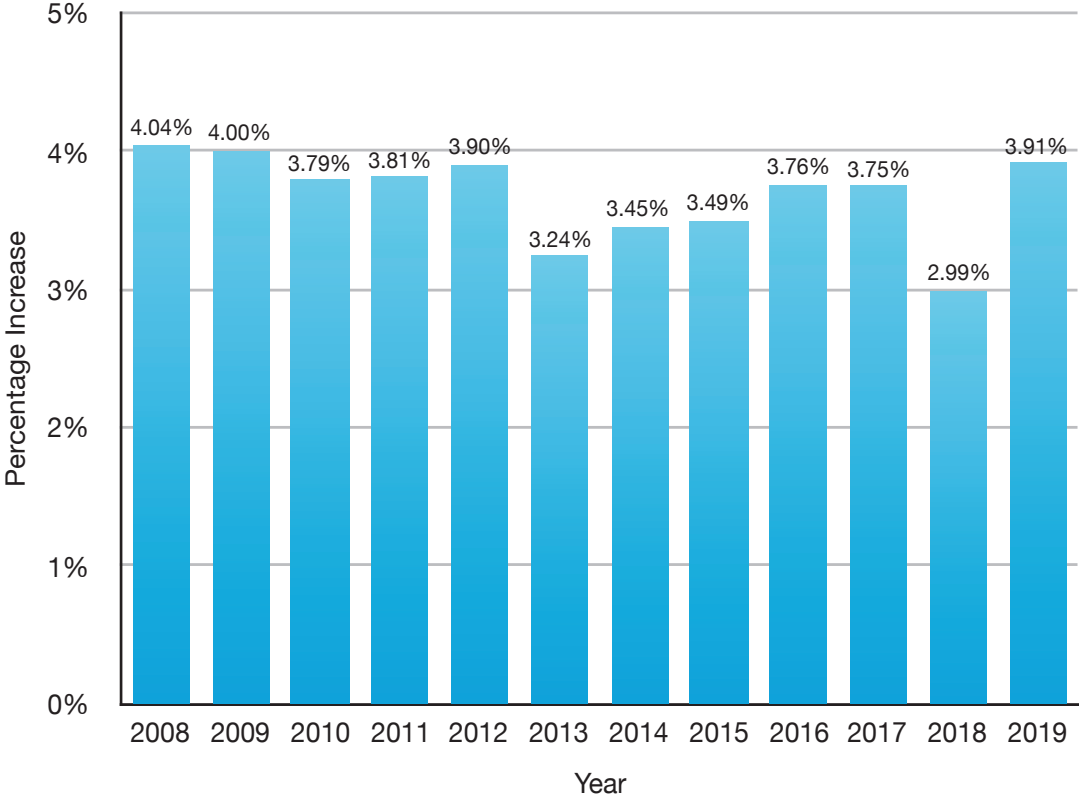
The undergraduate financial aid budget will increase 9.6 percent, for a total of \$129.9 million

By Sharon Chao
NEWS EDITOR

Tuition and fees for the 2018-19 academic year will increase 3.9 percent from \$49,892 to \$51,832, while the undergraduate financial aid budget will increase 9.6 percent from \$118.5 million to \$129.9 million, Provost Martin Schmidt announced at the Feb. 21 faculty meeting. Last year’s 3 percent increase in tuition and fees was the smallest increase since 1970, according to an MIT News article. However, this year’s greater tuition increase is attributed in part to the significantly higher increase in financial aid budget compared to last year’s 3.8 percent. “The financial aid package is applied so that the yield is constant,” Chancellor Cynthia Barnhart PhD ’88 said in an interview with *The Tech* last Wednesday. The Committee on Undergraduate Admissions and Financial Aid — which included 15 administrators, students, and professors, including Dean of Admissions and Student Financial Services Stuart Schmill ’86 — analyzes the demographics of admitted classes by income group and presents the

senior administration with recommendations for financial aid, according to Barnhart. Ultimately, the executive committee of the MIT Corporation decides the following year’s tuition and financial aid. MIT takes into account the tuition of several peer institutions — Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and Stanford — in order to remain competitive. Barnhart stated that statistics have shown if a student has the choice between MIT and another school not among those four, the student will likely attend MIT. “However, if it’s between MIT and one of HYPS, the numbers start dropping,” Barnhart said. Of the five schools, MIT has the lowest endowment per undergraduate at \$1.206 million, according to a 2017 New York Times article. The other schools have at least \$200,000 more per student, with Princeton being the highest at \$2.662 million per student. According to Barnhart, the additional tuition will help fund a variety of causes: building and dorm renovations, faculty and administrative salaries, and projects that improve on the student experience, such as Student Support Services and MindHandHeart.

Change in Tuition by Year (2008-2019)



ARON RICARDO PEREZ-LOPEZ—THE TECH

File Edit Options Buffers Tools Im-Python Python Help

```
import new_skills

def learnMarketableJobSkills():
    return linux, OSX, javascript, applescript, perl, python

if you.interest == True:
    print "E-mail join@tech.mit.edu"
```

----:----F1 joinTechno.py

(Python)--L1--Top-----

Martin on Senior House: ‘I would have done things differently’

Elections, from Page 1

Martin: The Designing the First Year Experience class has been something we both spent a lot of time working on, and I would say it is a pretty big accomplishment. Ian [Waitz] came to the UA last spring for this idea, and to see this class go through planning, running, and hopefully implementing changes will be really exciting. It's been a very long-term project.

I also think SwipeShare has been really, really exciting. A lot of people have donated and used the swipes and it's also raised awareness about food insecurity and accessibility in general at MIT.

Jiang: Within my role as secretary, improving communication and transparency both within the UA but also with the general student body is something that we talk about a lot. And I'm proud of the things I've done in the last year with improving the Byte, which Alexa [Martin] started, and also having other informal mailing lists and making sure that our meetings are more open and accessible.

Martin: Specifically something that we worked on a lot this year was decoupling the career fair revenues from direct student group funding. Moving forward, that's going to make a really big difference in career fair's ability to bring in companies that can't pay as much.

The Tech: What is your internal leadership style — what are you going to do to promote cohesiveness in the UA?

Martin: In general, the president should look very long term, like five years, ten years, on where they want MIT to go. And then it's working with the officer team to create a vision and a plan of how we're going to make that happen. And then it's trickling that down to committees and having them work on specific projects and initiatives.

So it's a lot about empowering [UA members] to work on things that they want to work on and creating a vision as one cohesive group instead of it being us telling them what to do.

Martin: I want to spend more time having our officers go to committee meetings and be more involved with the committees and understand what they're working on. Right now, I think the officers sit on this team above everyone, but the committee members don't really even know who we are or interact with us, and that's a problem. Looking forward, I want us to be more intimately involved with the committees so that we can really

make sure they're working to achieve their goals and that we're also giving them the support that they need.

The Tech: And then turning to your external leadership strategy, what do you see as your vision for communicating with the undergraduates? I think a lot of people — if you stop them in the Infinite, would not really know what the UA is doing, and maybe they also have needs you might not be addressing, so how would you reach out to them?

Martin: I want undergraduates to see the UA as an active and powerful body that can really effect change at MIT and effect change on behalf of students. I want to continue with the ua-inform [mailing list], but I also want to spend more time having actual in-person conversations with undergraduates.

Right now, we have meetings that rotate through dorms on campus. I want to spend more time really encouraging students to come to those meetings and to feel like they can actually bring agenda items.

The Tech: And what do you see as the major avenues for making sure students can know that they're empowered to seek change?

Jiang: Maybe for us to go into their communities during meal-times or during their house meetings are other ways for us to become closer to them, instead of asking for them to come to our office.

The Tech: Where do you see your major differences of opinion with the administration?

Martin: I don't know if I want to call it 'major differences of opinion.' I think that, in general, students and administrators want the same thing, right? Administrators don't want students to be unhappy; they don't want to do things that affect students in a negative way.

The Tech: What you think are the different approaches that students and administrators take to problems? How are you going to try and reconcile them?

Martin: It's very situation specific, but I think it's just coming to the table understanding that we both want to reach a common goal and we just have to figure out a way to do that. I also think it is important for us to understand how decisions are made at MIT. You can talk to administrators and ask for something, but at the end of the day, even if they wanted to give it to you, sometimes they can't because they're also following under other people [such as faculty].

The Tech: I want to talk about the events around Senior House last summer. Could you speak to student government's role in this? As student leaders during that time, would you have done something differently?

Martin: I'm going to answer your second question first. I would have done things differently.

I think a lot of times, it's hard as a student leader to act with your head and not your heart. And that's something that's really important to do, especially in times when you feel more emotional about an issue. It's very hard to stay level-headed and calm in meetings and act strategically.

And so, looking back on it, I wish that I as well as other student leaders had acted in that way, being more strategic and acting less with our hearts. But of course, it's a very difficult thing to do.

The Tech: What was the sort of strategic approach that you would have taken?

Martin: I think it would have been better to work with the administration more so than just fighting. In a lot of our meetings, we disagreed on many things. And instead of listening to their side, we just kept pushing back. At the time, it felt like the right thing to do. But looking back, I wish we had spent more time listening and trying to come to more of a compromise.

The Tech: And what do you think is the root of those disagreements?

Martin: A little bit of the root of the problem was that administrators were trying to protect students' safety and students were trying to protect student autonomy and student culture. We don't want to say that's what all students wanted or that's what all administrators wanted. That's not the case. But I think that in general, that was what the two groups were looking to preserve.

The Tech: Can you explain what this balance between student autonomy and safety is? What is your approach going to be in conflicts like these?

Jiang: Self-governance works really well when there is a level of trust between all parties. When students take responsibility for their own communities or spaces or education, it comes with certain responsibilities, and one of them is being cognizant of student safety. And I think a lot of the disagreements stem from the fact that administration just wants to make sure we are safe. And sometimes students forget that. I don't think that student autonomy and safety are inherently at odds

with each other.

Martin: I also think it's important to continue to have the administration build trust in students and in students' ability to self-govern.

Jiang: I mean that goes both ways though. We want to make sure that students have some sense of trust and belief in the administration.

The Tech: In what ways specifically are you going to try to do that this year?

Martin: One really good way to help foster that is for administrators to go to communities of students and to be open to hearing from students about their feedback and to also expand their office hours.

And I would really like for students to bring their concerns and their issues to us so that we can act upon them when we have these conversations with administrators.

Jiang: I think one other thing I would add is working with other governments on campus and other student leaders because they also have really valuable insight and experience.

The Tech: You are both Lab Assistants for Designing the First Year — what do you see the UA's role is going forward in the class and then how those results will be used?

Martin: Our position as SLAs right now, although we're both in the UA, isn't directly a UA channel. So I don't want to say that this class is a UA thing. But moving forward I really want the UA to be involved in hearing the recommendations from students and working to implement them.

The Tech: What are your main desires for the first year?

Martin: One of my desires is a leveling of the playing field. The first year should make every major accessible to every student no matter what background they came from.

Jiang: One thing I would add is the fact that a lot of students come into MIT feeling super excited. Then somewhere along the line in the first year they just lose that spark. And if there's one thing I would wish for, it's to have students maintain that energy even after their freshman year.

The Tech: I was looking through your platform, and a lot of items are already being worked on. Is there anything that you guys would like to see happening that just isn't happening, new causes you'd like to advocate for?

Martin: In my big vision for MIT, I think it should empower students to really be passionate about things

that they want to change in the world and to pursue those passions and not to just leave feeling really tired.

The Tech: What do you think would help make those changes?

Martin: I think it's a lot of little things, including mental health, education, professional development, student autonomy, student culture, and community. I think it's all these little things put together that would make MIT a really exciting place to be.

The Tech: We have all of these things now, but there's still something that you seem to see as broken. What is that precisely? How can we really make sure that students are empowered and excited?

Jiang: A lot of that is individual. For me, I got into student government because one day Allie [Stanton], the former president of EC, was like, 'Hey there's a DormCon meeting, you should come, I think you'd be interested,' and so I went. And so it's really individual connections and individual touch, and I think something like that is really hard to replicate as a large-scale institution.

Martin: One thing that we're not really working on right now as much as I would like to is working to create a more cohesive MIT community. It's really great that people feel very much a part of their living groups or different communities. But there isn't one MIT community that I think people feel strongly a part of.

Jiang: Students are only here for about four years, so it's hard to take a long-term view on things. We need to start having conversations now about long-term projects like dorm renovations, but that's a really hard thing to get people to be motivated to do.

Jiang: [discussing the disconnect between students and administrators] There are a lot of conversations that don't really get escalated to a level where the people who make decisions know about it. And that's a pipeline that needs to exist.

Martin: I think one glaring example of this is SafeRide OnDemand. We met about it two days ago, and the administrators had absolutely no idea that students didn't like it. No one is sending feedback to [them]. And we happened to send out a survey to undergraduates — a very informal one — that got a lot of responses that we've now passed along. But if we hadn't done that, all of these conversations would have never been put into action.

Editor's note: This interview was edited for length and clarity.

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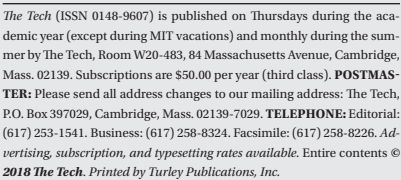
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Say Hello

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Trevor Klee is the official GRE instructor for MIT's Laureates and Leaders program.

Solution to Ravenclaw
from page 13

5	1	2	4	3	6
4	6	1	3	2	5
6	2	3	5	4	1
1	3	4	6	5	2
2	4	5	1	6	3
3	5	6	2	1	4

Solution to Hufflepuff
from page 13

4	1	2	6	5	3
3	6	1	5	4	2
5	2	3	1	6	4
2	5	6	4	3	1
6	3	4	2	1	5
1	4	5	3	2	6

Solution to Gryffindor
from page 13

4	1	6	3	2	5
2	5	4	1	6	3
1	4	3	6	5	2
3	6	5	2	1	4
5	2	1	4	3	6
6	3	2	5	4	1

Solution to Slytherin
from page 13

3	4	5	2	1	6
5	6	1	4	3	2
6	1	2	5	4	3
4	5	6	3	2	1
1	2	3	6	5	4
2	3	4	1	6	5

Solution to Space
from page 14

5	6	2	1	9	7	4	8	3
2	3	8	7	6	4	1	5	9
4	5	1	9	8	6	3	7	2
1	2	7	6	5	3	9	4	8
3	4	9	8	7	5	2	6	1
7	8	4	3	2	9	6	1	5
9	1	6	5	4	2	8	3	7
8	9	5	4	3	1	7	2	6
6	7	3	2	1	8	5	9	4

Solution to Peeves
from page 12

T	H	E	R	E	W	I	L	M	A	S	I	S
H	E	M	E	N	A	R	E	A	R	E	A	S
O	L	I	V	E	B	R	A	N	C	H	L	I
S	I	T	E	M	A	P	S	P	A	V	E	D
			R	I	G	S	S	H	A	K	E	R
C	L	O	S	E	S	P	L	A	N	A	R	
L	U	R	E	S	S	A	I	L	S	M	E	G
A	L	A	S	R	H	Y	M	E	N	I	T	E
P	U	N	P	A	R	E	E	F	I	N	A	L
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L	E	W		E	M	A	I	L	A	R	N	I
E	L	L		T	A	W	N	Y	T	A	I	N

Solution to So Close
from page 11

4	2	5	6	1	3
3	1	4	5	6	2
1	5	2	3	4	6
5	3	6	1	2	4
6	4	1	2	3	5
2	6	3	4	5	1

Solution to Spring Break
from page 11

4	5	7	1	6	2	8	3	9
8	2	3	4	5	9	6	7	1
6	1	9	7	8	3	2	5	4
2	3	8	6	7	1	9	4	5
1	9	5	3	2	4	7	6	8
7	4	6	8	9	5	3	1	2
9	7	2	5	1	6	4	8	3
5	6	4	9	3	8	1	2	7
3	8	1	2	4	7	5	9	6

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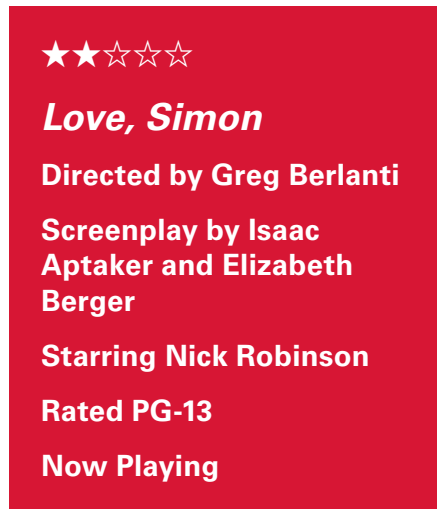
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MOVIE REVIEW

'Love, Simon' tries too hard to be a chick flick

Why I didn't enjoy this movie about a closeted gay high schooler



By Patricia Gao
STAFF WRITER

It's been two years since I read *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda*, but I can still remember my favorite things about the book. It was funny, sweet, and as unrealistic as any typical high-school-based YA novel. I liked the main character, Simon — whose closeted gayness is the main issue of the book — and the depth of his relationships with other characters. His family was quirky, and his friends and classmates had interactions that weren't solely dependent on Simon. His love story was interesting, too: one major plot point is Simon's budding email-catalyzed relationship with the mysterious "Blue," a classmate who is also hiding his sexual orientation. Simon spends much of the book trying to figure out who Blue is, and in the meantime he

learns fictional-teenager basics like (1) don't lie to keep your secrets and (2) be kind to your little sister (she was just trying to help).

Anyway, I cheered at the end of *Simon vs. The Homo Sapiens Agenda*. I may have even cried. So I was excited to watch *Love, Simon* (the movie adaptation of *Simon vs.*) last Wednesday. The movie, I hoped, would be a celebration of a book I'd liked, not to mention the positive things that had happened in the two years since I read the book, like the creation of the Stonewall National Monument and the lifting of the ban on the openly transgender serving in the military. The world, on the whole, seems more accepting of the LGBTQ+ community, and I was ready for the movie to reflect that.

However, I was disappointed. Though it's got a good soundtrack and is, at points, hilarious, *Love, Simon* is riddled with flaws. I can look past the stilted conversation, predictable plot, and one-dimensional side-kicks, but I am undeniably saddened by the biggest mistake of all: leaving the LGBTQ+ out of the film.

Yes, movie Simon lives in a society we are striving towards, where people are accepting of sexual identities (or reprimanded, and then apologetic, for the opposite). But the voices in *Love, Simon* are depressingly straight. For a movie about a gay teenager, there is a sad lack of gay teenager anywhere.

Perhaps that is an exaggeration. Simon's love interest, Blue, is played by an actor who identifies as queer; Ethan, a stereotypically effeminate peer, is played by the openly gay Clark Moore. But the expression of those characters is muffled by the underperformance of Nick Robinson, who plays



COURTESY OF TWENTIETH CENTURY FOX

Jorge Lendeborg (Nick), Nick Robinson (Simon), Alexandra Shipp (Abby), and Katherine Langford (Leah) star in Twentieth Century Fox's *Love, Simon*.

Simon. Robinson seems to have been cast for no reason other than his vague resemblance to Ansel Elgort. And his brother, who came out as gay during the filming of *Love, Simon*, is probably better at acting straight than Robinson is at acting gay. For the most part, Nick ignores his character's sexual orientation, even though it is supposed to be the movie's focus. After admitting that he is gay in the first few frames, and "proving it" by awkwardly interacting with a muscly gardener, Robinson's Simon treats his sexuality like an extra toe — something that is absolutely there but sadly ignored. He doesn't appear to actually like boys, much

less flirt with them. He hardly has a personality, much less one that was partly formed by his sexual identity. The kiss at the end is odd, and its fakeness is glaring.

So *Love, Simon* was difficult to watch and far poorer than the book it was adapted from. While I'm happy that Hollywood is diversifying content, addressing current issues, and promoting a culture of acceptance, I'll have trouble recommending this movie to anyone. It's been over 2,000 years since men played women in the Greek theatre — you'd think the entertainment industry would have improved much more by now.

OPERA REVIEW

'Oh the shark, babe, has such teeth, dear'

The 'opera for beggars' brings its bawdy humor and wit to Boston



COURTESY OF LIZA VOLL PHOTOGRAPHY

Kelly Kaduce as Polly Peachum sings the iconic 'Pirate Jenny' in the Boston Lyric Opera's production of Weill and Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera*.

By Ivy Li
ARTS EDITOR

For those who have never heard of *The Threepenny Opera*, you are in for a treat. Think of a modern raunchy rom-com, or every time a novel was censored for mature content, or go to the past and think of Voltaire's *Candide*. And now think about opera, the soprano's voice echoing through the hall, the audience's impeccable suits and dresses, and the richness of the orchestral music. Put the two together, plus an overt confrontation against capitalism, and we have *The Threepenny Opera*, named so for its irony: a cheap "opera" that could be attended by poor beggars and a play with music that champions the poor, that offers snide remarks at justice, or the lack thereof.

This opera has an interesting history. An English opera by John Gay's *The Beggar's*

of murderer and rapist Macheath getting away with his crimes, while the poor keep begging, but it never amounts to anything.

The upbeat yet tense music score with David Angus's conducting and the female operatic singers was superb. Our lead, Polly Peachum (Kelly Kaduce), or as she insists, the wife of Macheath, is played by Kaduce with overt playfulness. Her nasally, affronted, childish voice is so amusing that when Kaduce does open her mouth to sing for Macheath's criminal friends, the audience is left captivated at the contrast. Naturally, Polly's parents are displeased by her choice of husband and take it upon themselves to get Macheath arrested despite his connections. This is not a fight between the civilized versus a criminal, but a battle amongst the scavengers of the underground. Polly's parents, Celia (Michelle Trainor) and Jonathan Peachum (James Maddalena), run the business of managing London's beggars, controlling where and how they can beg. Celia and her cackling laughter is delightfully entertaining as she bribes prostitutes who meet with Macheath to find his location. Jonathan's wit sets him against Macheath in various scenes, particularly the end as Jonathan controls the beggars and sets them upon Macheath in prison. Meanwhile, Lucy Brown (Chelsea Basler), daughter of Tiger Brown, is another of Macheath's seduced lovers. Basler's Lucy is played with amusing haughtiness, maintains that she is Macheath's wife, and is at odds with Polly, the recently "wedded."

In 1928, this production was indubitably shocking, both for its crass, bawdy humor, and its politics. Even today, in a liberal bubble, the sexism in some of the characters still feels a bit jarring. We must be clear: this features sexist characters, particularly Macheath who rapes and seduces women, but the opera itself is not, by essence, sexist. Macheath's guilt is clear. We witness the derision of women by Macheath and his gang of crooks, a horde of female prostitutes, Macheath having multiple lovers

The Threepenny Opera

Produced by Boston Lyric Opera

Music by Kurt Weill

Libretto by Bertolt Brecht

**English translation by
Michael Feingold**

Huntington Avenue Theater

Playing through March 25

despite a monogamous relationship, and a demonstration of Polly Peachum's sexuality to her parents. This all fits neatly into this microcosm of London's underbelly. The humor is akin to that of *Candide*: the characters go so quickly through horror that the sudden realization of what happened is felt as a whiplash; this is the cause of discomfort, not just the grim material.

I heard audience members behind me acknowledging that this “was a dark story.” But I hear that term thrown around often. I did not find this dark. I found it lighthearted, a parody, and in some regard, a bastardization, of the highbrow art of opera; this has hints of opera, but it feels more like a musical. The ending, which I won’t spoil, could be a cheap copout to some, acknowledges that Brecht and Weill treated their criticism of capitalism seriously but snidely turned their noses at a choice of art form (i.e. an opera). Some things are too pat to be real, but the poverty of London holds true for its time. This opera is wily, playful, and raunchy not because it can be, but because it *must* be.



March 15 – April 8

More foolhardy than fated

By Carolyn Fu

It is fitting then that when Romeo and Juliet finally meet, their love is an almost cloyingly saccharine one; shy, tentative and full of awkward flirtation. My priors, when it comes to Romeo and Juliet, are Peter Martin's and Kenneth Macmillan's choreographies — two extremely sweeping, heavy, and ultimately devastating love stories. As such, it is a very strange thing for me to watch Arrais and Kuranaga come together, then back away

I will say that, in contrast, the death scene that did strike me surprisingly deeply was Mercutio's, performed by Derek Dunn. He is likewise as glib as Romeo from the beginning, but while Arrais portrays this through a look of far-off wonder, Dunn does so with a cheeky air of laissez-faire. This ages him instantly, signaling to the audience that Mercutio is acutely aware of the darkness and violence of the world around him but is upbeat about it to an almost heroic degree. As such, his eventual defeat rings out like a loss of hope, finally providing the searing emotional fallout that I came to this ballet in search of.



MOVIE REVIEW

Raid a tomb, fire a bow

Lara Croft's coming-of-age adventure leaves much to be expected in the new *Tomb Raider*



COURTESY OF WARNER BROS

Alicia Vikander **Lara Croft in Warner Bros. Pictures' and Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer Pictures' action adventure *Tomb Raider*.**

By Mahi Shafiullah
STAFF WRITER

Lara Croft has lived a long life, starting from a polygonal mesh in 1996 that was part teenage fantasy and part reality. But, the 2018 reboot falls short of being either. Roar Uthaug tried to juggle two disjoint goals of making Lara more relatable and creating a blockbuster. But he ended up with a mundane movie that provides little more fun than watching hours of gameplay on YouTube.

Tomb Raider goes wrong in many obvious directions — it has an uninspired story, miscast lead, tedious dialogues, and action scenes better suited for a limping horse. A valiant effort to redefine Lara can be seen

from the very beginning. But it seems misguided; taking out the character tropes associated with Lara Croft won't work unless the producers put in more content to fill that void, and Uthaug and his team simply didn't seem up to the challenge.

The biggest put-off of this movie is the unfortunate casting — the capable actors are squandered by a dull dialogue and writing. No one doubts the abilities of Oscar-winning actress Alicia Vikander, but her role could very easily be reduced to going through the motions. She had no room for personalizing the character like Angelina Jolie did in the 2003 series. Dominic West looks his part as a missing zillionaire father to Lara, but two of his reunions, one with Lara and another

with his nemesis Vogel, squander emotional investment by being flat-out emotionless. Some props should go to Walton Goggins — he did add a touch of soul to the otherwise generic, mustache-twirling, evil character Vogel. But it takes two to tango, and he was the only one dancing. Finally, the addition and the amazing squandering of Daniel Wu seems nonsensical — here, they had a capable actor, but they couldn't think of anything else for him to do other than being a mostly inert, under-hinted love interest of Lara Croft. We could only ask, "Why is he then only a token minority in this movie?"

Editing is another aspect where the film falls short of expectation. The movie has its fair share of action scenes. But, most of the time, the action feels very discrete, with the cuts interrupting the fluidity of the movements and destroying immersions in the scenes when they are most necessary, like the final combat between Lara and Vogel.

The only aspect of the movie that should be praised highly is the puzzle scenes. The few puzzles that exist are engaging, and the scenes capture the tension so appropriately that it almost felt like solving a puzzle in a video game. Few other scenes also have a distinct video game flavor. One could almost imagine them being divided into introductory short cutscenes, action sequences with narrow escapes, and the resulting cutscenes once the player succeeds after numerous tries. But, such a strong video game flavor doesn't work well in a blockbuster setting.

★★★★★

Tomb Raider

Directed by Roar Uthaug

**Screenplay by Geneva
Robertson-Dworet and
Alastair Siddons**

**Starring Alicia Vikander,
Dominic West, Walton
Goggins, Daniel Wu,
Kristin Scott Thomas**

Rated PG-13

Now Playing

— engaging can be difficult if you haven't played a puzzle-based action-adventure before.

If you really had no plans for this weekend or any weekday night, you could go and watch *Tomb Raider*. But, in my opinion, you would be encouraging the already lazy studios that keep churning out movies like this hoping for a mindless blockbuster. Why don't you go and support your local theater groups instead?

THEATER REVIEW

The most beautiful thing in the world

An awe-inspiring production that will ensnare your heart and steal your breath

★★★★★

Guards at The Taj

Written by Rajiv Joseph

Directed by Gabriel Vega Weissman

Central Square Theater

March 1 – April 1

By Johnson Huynh
STAFF WRITER

Horrific, touching, and deeply beautiful, Weissman's production brings to life Rajiv Joseph's play with such wonderful magic that it will mesmerize you from start to finish. Many times throughout the play have I

anxiously found myself on the edge of my seat, anticipating some sort of relief from the tension. Other times, I felt my jaw plummet, agape out of the horror that Weissman has executed so eloquently. In other words, this is a spectacular work of art.

Guards at The Taj paints us a scene of India during 1648. The Taj Mahal, an immaculate tomb for Shah's wife, is nearing completion. Tasked with guarding their portion of the wall that surrounds the Taj, Humayun (Jacob Athyal) and Babur (Harsh J. Gagoomal) whittle away at the hours with meaningless talk. They are stuck at the absolute bottom of the food chain, looking for some upward movement.

In what is so clearly a callback to *Waiting for Godot*, the duo talk about anything and everything, even if it's just about the concept of beauty. Although there aren't any extreme scene changes or fight scenes happening on stage, the chemistry that the two guards have is undeniably touching and heartwarming. They'll complain about their lots in life, or Humayun would listen

to Babur rattle off about the dreams he had. Instantaneously, you develop a close connection with these characters. Both Athyal and Gagoomal do an impeccable job fleshing out their roles, sparking life into the production.

I can solidly say that their 30 minutes of talking were more entertaining than fight scenes in other plays. I smiled. I laughed. I almost fell out of my seat. It was as though I was reliving my childhood through Humayun and Babur's friendship. Then, Babur questions why they've stood for so long in front of the Taj without ever looking behind them. Defying Humayun's warnings, he turns around. The theater felt magical in that one second, glowing with the light of the dawn that wasn't quite there but it didn't matter. Reluctant, Humayun turns around to face the dawn, shoulder-to-shoulder with his brother.

But new dawns cast new shadows. The people who built the Taj, under the orders of the Shah, must have their hands removed. And the people to do so? Humayun

and Babur. Any pretense that *Guards at The Taj* had of being peaceful gets thrown out of the window. It quickly becomes a deeply philosophical play. Every second, you are plagued with an unspeakable despair. For a play to even broach that territory is a feat. Both Gagoomal and Athyal must be commended for reflecting this subtle change so precisely that it's unbelievable that they could play such extremes in personalities.

Two-actor productions are notoriously difficult to pull off well, if at all. I came into the theater with low expectations, but *Guards at the Taj* exceeded my expectations so many times over. The world changed when I walked out of that theater. Perhaps it was me? As director Weissman puts it, “Rajiv’s beautifully eviscerating play is proof of the importance of human connection.”

Indeed, I felt just a tiny bit closer to the world. Celestial luminary that it is, *Guards at the Taj* will break your world and put it back together again. If not for the amazing acting and stagecraft, then watch it for its glorious beating heart.

Have something to say?

Write opinion for *The Tech!*

opinion@tech.mit.edu



Ripe Frenzy rips back the curtains on gun violence to show a bitter-sweet truth



By Johnson Huynh
STAFF WRITER

As an actress, Duerr holds so much emotion in each of her motions. From how she solemnly looks away to when she starts to talk about her son to how giddy she gets when she talks about the town, Duerr owns her part. However, there's something dark lurking underneath the surface of the play. Sudden clips of a hallway, characters talking about the recent shooting in Michigan, or Zoe's reluctance to actually talk

Though, the technical aspect of the show

Studio ONE | Boston University

In the end, Barclay tells a story of humans. There are some plays that ask you to accept its conceit, to follow its fancies. This one demands that you shine a light on what our society obscures. Brave and political is how I would describe the performance. This is truly one that reflects not only the best of theater but also the pain in our own hearts, the kind that lingers long after one bad day.

MIT Shakespeare Ensemble brings the classic tragedy to life (or rather, to death) in *Queen Lear*

March 17–19, 22–24, 2018

By Erica Weng
STAFF WRITER

The other characters adorn the play with quirks of their own. Regan (Ruth Tweedy '20), second oldest daughter of Lear, sports a seductive outfit of black leather, a crop

We have our lights masters, Collin Fjalkovich '19 and Cami Ramirez '16, to thank for that. The amount of detail they put into lighting is extraordinary. Collin describes the technique behind some of the grimmer scenes of the show: "By using box boom sidelight as front lighting, shadow



Queen Lear (Grace Kuffner '21) meets with her three daughters, Goneril (Kate Yee '20), Regan (Ruth Tweedy '20) and Cordelia (Anjali Nambrath '21) where they declare their love for their mother at MIT Shakespeare Ensemble's Queen Lear March 15.

It wasn't easy to piece together that crucial scene. "There was an immense amount of designer collaboration as well as artistic

All in all — what a stellar performance that brought out in all its brilliance the dark and the absurd power of the Shakespearean tragedy. Shows go on this Thursday, Friday, and Saturday at 8 p.m. Don't miss out — get your taste of the dark and grim.

Spring Break

Solution, page 6

				6	2		3	
			4		9			
			7	8		2		4
	3			7	1	9	4	
		5				7		
	4	6	8	9			1	
9		2		1	6			
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	8		2	4				

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column, row, and 3 by 3 grid contains exactly one of each of the digits 1 through 9.

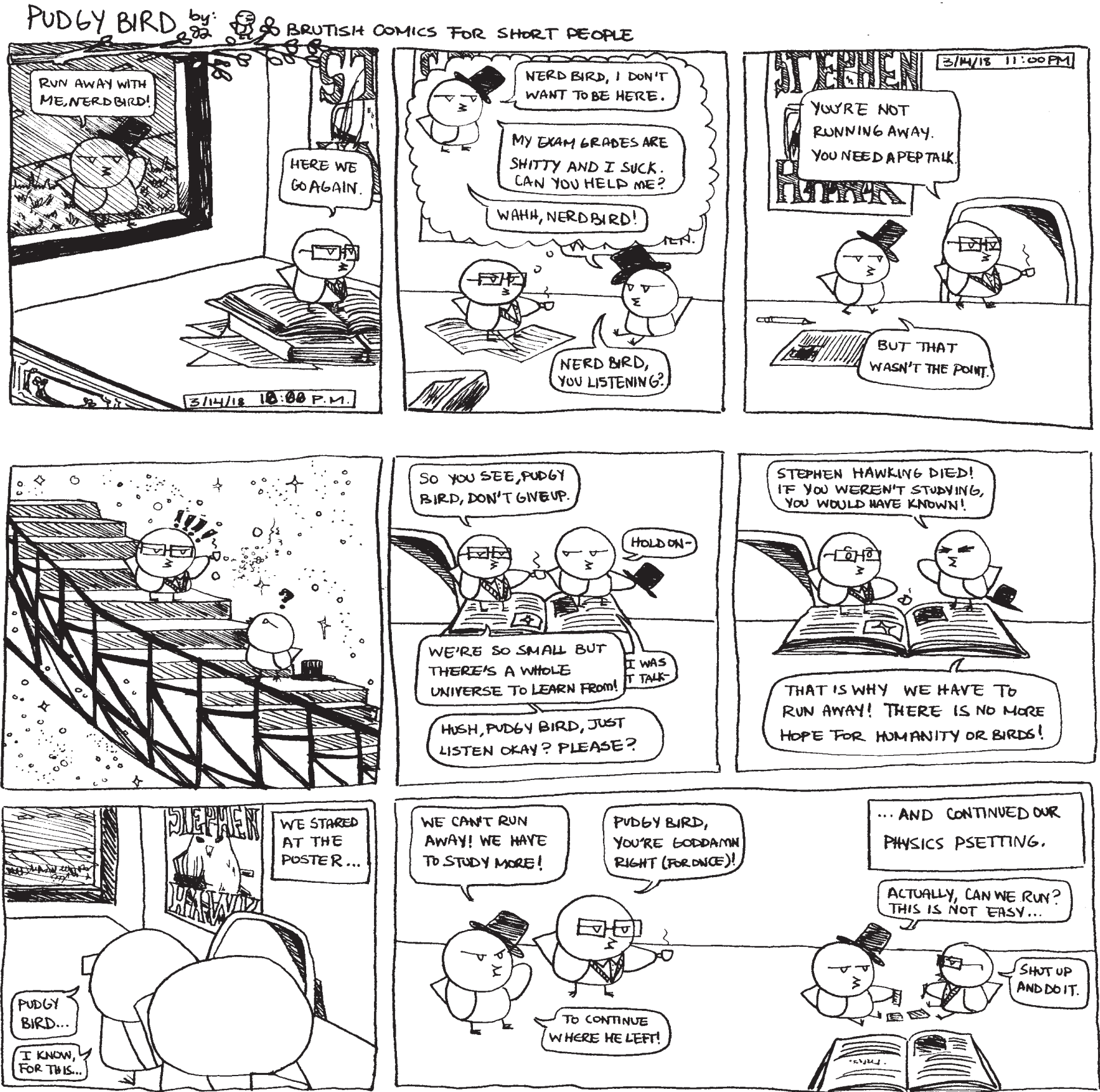
So Close

Solution, page 6

24x		1-	90x		
	1			24x	12x
5x	30x		3		
		6x	16x		
144x				75x	
2		12x			1

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1-6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

Stephen Hawking by Ivy Li



Peeves by Fred Piscop

Solution, page 6

ACROSS

- 1 "All done!"
- 6 Major hurricane of 2005
- 11 Family nickname
- 14 Two-fisted ones
- 15 Milieus
- 16 "That's not very enticing!"
- 17 Peace symbol
- 19 Factor in golf-club selection
- 20 Links on many home pages
- 21 Worked with decorative stones, perhaps
- 23 Haulers on highways
- 24 Minced-onion containers
- 26 Trading-day conclusions
- 29 Two-dimensional
- 30 Tries to draw
- 31 Shoves off
- 32 RAM measure
- 35 Something said with a sigh
- 36 What the puzzle's keywords each lack
- 37 Dark time, in brief
- 38 Pullet Surprise, e.g.
- 39 Capital city of song
- 40 Big part of a grade

- 41 Uncle Sam feature
43 Screen image, essentially
44 Spoke ill of
46 Subway fare
47 Mongoose's prey
48 Muzzles
52 Pointless fuss
53 Decoration depicting
Washington
56 Name on the cover of
Ben-Hur
57 "Recently Deleted" folder
filler
58 Golf Hall of Fame
nickname
59 Bracket shape
60 Lion-colored
61 Stigmatize

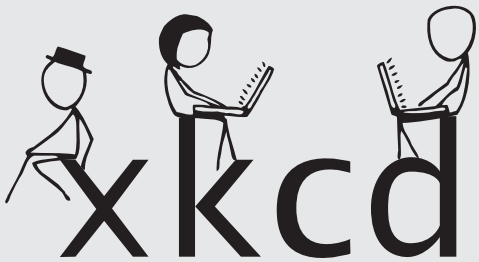
DOWN

- 1 Part of Edison's signature
- 2 Prefix for pad
- 3 Throw out
- 4 Flip-flops
- 5 The other side
- 6 Navigational distortions, in sci-fi

- 7 Parts of some portfolios
8 Dawson or Deighton
9 Cheese's popular partner
10 Hearth accessories
11 Source of the Lone
 Ranger's ammo
12 Not as chummy
13 Sports-team postings,
 informally
18 They ride on some
 carousels
22 Dossier letters
24 Marsh gunk
25 Vigorous
26 Sound of approval
27 Quite a sight
28 Venerable New Year's event
29 "Bearer," at times
31 Render unreadable
33 Bibliography abbr.
34 Takes shape
36 Have prestige
37 The early '70s
39 Balcony's edge
40 Topper with a long rear
 brim
42 Rebus conjunction

1	2	3	4	5		6	7	8	9	10		11	12	13
14						15						16		
17					18							19		
20										21	22			
			23				24	25						
26	27	28				29								
30						31						32	33	34
35					36						37			
38				39						40				
		41	42					43						
44	45							46						
47						48						49	50	51
52				53	54	55								
56				57						58				
59				60						61				

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|
| 43 South American “King of Football” | 49 “Please?” |
| 44 With 45 Down, architect’s creation | 50 Poetic land |
| 45 See 44 Down | 51 Change one’s mind about dropping |
| 46 Rolling, as topography | 54 Whom Quentin directed in three films |
| 48 Test drive | 55 Unprocessed |



**A WEBCOMIC OF ROMANCE,
SARCASM, MATH, AND LANGUAGE**

by Randall Munroe

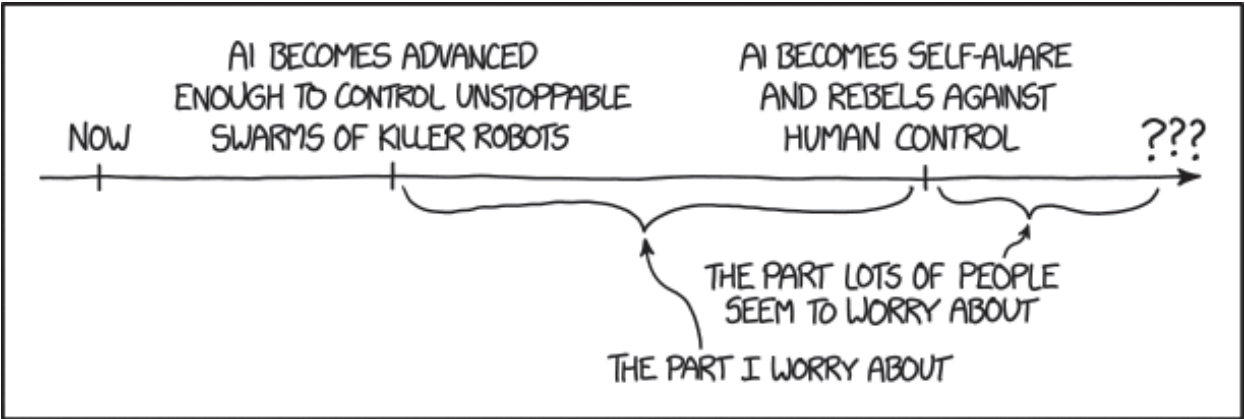
[1969] Not Available



IF YOU EVER REALLY WANT TO
MAKE PEOPLE MAD, SET THIS AS
YOUR 404/"NOT FOUND" PAGE.

If my country ever picks a new national flag, this is on my shortlist for designs to argue for, but I think in the end I'll go with the green puzzle piece or broken image thumbnail.

[1968] Robot Future



mean, we already live in a world of flying robots killing people. I don't worry about how powerful the machines are, I worry about who the machines give power to.

Ravenclaw

Solution, page 6

5x		8x		144x	
144x			15x		5
	72x				1
1			180x		2
40x					7+
17+					

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

Gryffindor

Solution, page 6

480x			30x		
2		120x			3
3x		15+			8x
	60x			1	
5		3+		18x	
18x			20x		

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

Hufflepuff

Solution, page 6

60x	360x				3
		3x	21+		
	30x		1		
2		2-	60x		
5-			1÷		
	20x		3		6

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.

Slytherin

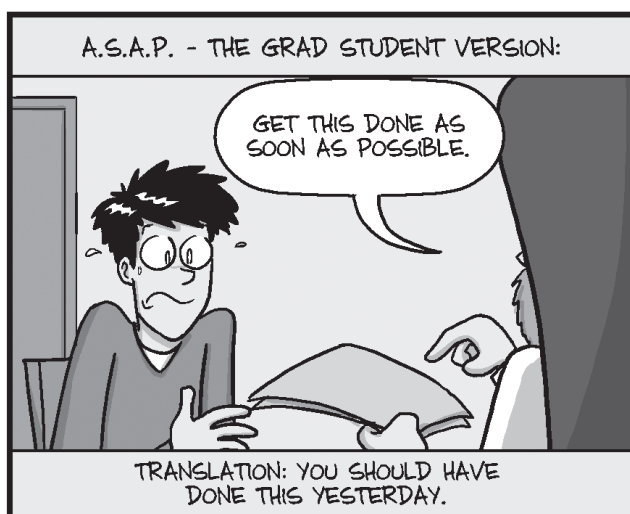
Solution, page 6

300x			8x		12x
	6÷			3	
30x		10x		14+	
4		54x			1
12x			6÷		20x
		4		6	

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–6. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.



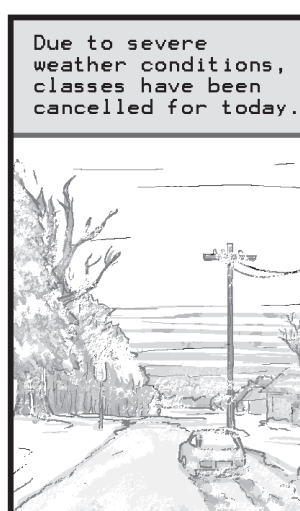
by Jorge Cham



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Solution, page 6

Instructions: Fill in the grid so that each column and row contains exactly one of each of the numbers 1–9. Follow the mathematical operations for each box.





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Colin Powell School for
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Postdoctoral Research Fellow
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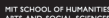
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